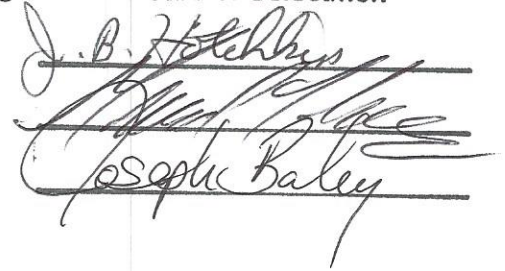


Town of Middleton
Board of Selectmen Meeting
February 27, 2017

Approved By
Board of Selectmen



Called to order at 6:33 P.M

BOS Members Present: J. Hotchkiss, M. Schwarz, J. Bailey

Pledge Recited

Signature Action:

- J. Bailey motions to accept the minutes from the BOS meeting 2-6-17 as written. M. Schwarz seconds, all in favor.
- J. Bailey motions to accept the minutes from the BOS nonpublic meeting 2-6-17 as written. M. Schwarz seconds, all in favor.
- Abatements signed as presented. There are 5 abatements presented. Avitar has reviewed all and made either approvals or denials. Three approvals with one that will not receive a refund but the refund will be applied to taxes owed and two will be refunded. Two have been denied for reasons explained.
- L. Parker suggested scheduling a meet the candidate night for the candidates. J. Bailey suggested at the next BOS meeting. Meet the candidate night will be Monday March 6, 2017 at 6:00 PM. Police Chief Blodgett will also be present to introduce himself as the new Chief before town meeting. J. Kalar suggested posted on the board outside.
- Board of Selectmen signed the warrant articles that will be posted with the budget. Both the voting and town meeting will take place at the Highway Garage. L. Adamo asked why the town would not use the new school for town meeting. J. Hotchkiss advised that town meeting is not being held at the school because of the parking concerns at the school location. People need to be aware that parking also cannot happen close to a municipal well.

Old Business

New Business

- J. Bailey speaks about the upcoming postings to the roads. Discussion on should there be a fine for passing on posted roads. Possible fine would be calculated on the vehicle weight. R. Washburn worked on a possible fee schedule. Example 1st offense would be \$100 or \$.02 per pound. Without a scale the individual would be charged the \$100 or State police would be called in with a scale. Nothing can be finalized unless there is a public hearing. This is just up for discussion. J. Keegan was questioning driving your vehicles home after a day of work on those posted roads. There would also be an application for individuals to haul over posted roads. If application is approved they would have to have the approval with them in the truck. J. Keegan asked if DOT would enforce the roads that are posted. Chief Blodgett states that the DOT and State police are not always available to enforce our roads. J. Keegan voiced his concerns with running a truck company and putting restrictions on the roads. Reminder that 153 is a state road. Chief Blodgett says things are handled on a case by case. L. Parker asked if the Board wants to schedule a public hearing. J. Hotchkiss stated that they are not ready for that stage yet, this needs more discussion. Mrs. Fournier wants to know if a scale is requested with DOT come out. Only if they are available. Mr. Fournier mentioned that you can request they truck go to a scale if needed. This will be continued. If at the next meeting the road agent is present he may be able to clarify. J. Keegan mentioned that he know CANN

Brothers will need to get his trucks home. J. Bailey states that he will need to know about the weight limits. The approval applications can be from one certain date to another not needed daily.

- J. Hotchkiss talks about a milfoil grant. A part of each registration goes to the state and helps with grants. There is an application for \$6,500. The grant would pay 33 % \$1,950 and the town would pay \$4,500 which is already in the milfoil account. J. Kalar asked if it states what the \$6,500 covers. J. Hotchkiss advised that it would cover divers and removal of the milfoil and reports to DES. J. Bailey motions to accept the grant, M. Schwarz seconds, all in favor. J. Hotchkiss needs to sign as the Board of Selectmen chair and M. Schwarz will sign as the certifier that J. Hotchkiss is chair. J. Coskie asked if we still have a committee that inspects certain sections of the lake. J. Kalar thought it was DES that comes and inspects the lake. J. Hotchkiss states that there are volunteers that coordinated through J. Mullen and collect samples and sends them to the state for sampling. J. Coksie asked if there is anyone does sporadic inspections the boats that go in and out of the lake. M. Schwarz believes that Marine Patrol does patrol the lake.
- J. Hotchkiss gives credit to the Highway Crew for the work on Gary road.
- J. Fournier is looking for an update on the Kings Highway Gravel Pit New Durham. J. Hotchkiss mentions that when the meeting took place there were several things that had not been completed for the project to move forward. There would also need to be a special exception through the New Durham Zoning Board. So at this point the project is dead in the water until they get all the needed information together. J. Hotchkiss has attended all the meeting to assure residents would know it was not the Middleton Pit on Kings Highway. Middleton will be notified of any additional meetings as the town is listed as an abutter.
- D. O'Toole has a request of the board. Since she is not running for another term, she would like the board to read the letter that came back from the DA's office of clearing her of any wrong doing so she can leave her position knowing she has done no wrong. L. Parker produced the letter for the board. J. Bailey suggested updating the audience before reading the letter so they would know the background. J. Hotchkiss read aloud letter dated 10-5-16 addressed to Randy Sobel regarding Debbie O'Toole. D. O'Toole explains how her process has always been working with the homeowner on taxes owed. She wants to leave her position with all knowing that she did nothing wrong. J. Bailey mentions that D. O'Toole and her predecessors have always done this practice and didn't know anything different. The Board as well believes in this practice, not to take homes. The Board had to make paperwork changes in the process. D. Cremmens mentions that this has been a practice that has been going on since the 1990's and feels that it is ridiculous that D. O'Toole was investigated for helping people. J. Coskie speaks how it is a benefit to the town for someone to be kept in their home and how the town doesn't need to be taking over any more properties. J. Hotchkiss mentions how it is now in writing and talks about how there is a difference in property that is land on or property that someone lives on. J. Caliri asked who asked for the investigation on D. O'Toole. J. Hotchkiss answers that the police were asked to investigate but they recused themselves. Did the public ask the police? M. Schwarz answered that he asked for the investigation. J. Keegan would like to see the procedure in place, and if there was a procedure in place this would not have happened. D. O'Toole mentions that there is a procedure she must follow which are the RSA's on the tax deeding. The only part that is not in the RSA is how the town can work with residents before deeding the property. J. Bailey comments that the only policy they had to put in writing is the payment plan. L. Parker mentions that no one knows if there was ever anything in writing years ago. It was not located if there was one. B. Lawrence comments how the investigator just one day showed up. D. O'Toole comments how she was never even questioned if there were concerns, she feels she was just thrown under the bus. J. Hotchkiss believes the police handled the situation correctly. J. Hotchkiss does not feel the town should just be taking homes. Some towns do not deed at all. J. Caliri mentions that this has happened to him, where he would like to applaud the town for working with him during the same kind of situation and is grateful he still lives in Middleton. He feels that the Fire Chief was spearheaded. J. Caliri mentions that there was no investigation on him when D. O'Toole was working with him on taxes. J. Hotchkiss mentions that

there are definitely others in town that the town works with that were not investigated. M. Schwarz states it is a matter of record keeping.

- J. Kalar speaks about a letter she has that berated other board members. She recalls an incident in August of 2015 where the entrance to where she lives was blocked off by a Selectman. She states this is false imprisonment and that came from the Attorney General's office. J. Bailey questions the letter. He is not aware of a letter. J. Kalar mentions if it was on Facebook then it can be mentioned in public session. J. Caliri has questions about the same letter J. Kalar read letter that was posted on Facebook by M. Schwarz. J. Keegan is confused about the letter. J. Caliri questions five points in the letter. He questions if M. Schwarz have confidence in the Fire Chief and/or Police Chief. He questions liability of the town. Police Chief Blodgett makes it known that he does not mind Selectmen on his scenes. J. Caliri comments on how both Chiefs have brought on new members to make both departments better. He also questions the comments about favoritism in the town and M. Schwarz favoritism with an ex-firefighter. J. Caliri questions why M. Schwarz does not oversee the fire warden, which again he is questioning favoritism. M. Schwarz states the selectmen does not oversee the fire warden, it is handled by the state. J. Caliri states that if Selectman Schwarz is that unhappy with the town, other Selectmen and dept. heads than he would be willing to take his board seat that night. M. Schwarz feels that the letter he posted is being read different ways, some take it positive and some read it as negative. J. Kalar mentions that the letter seems that M. Schwarz is acting alone as a Selectman and according to the rules that cannot happen. J. Kalar brings up things from the last Selectmen's meeting that was discussed and the other two Selectmen (Bailey and Hotchkiss) knew nothing about. Question about M. Schwarz placing a complaint regarding the Fire Chief with the Police department for a town resident as a Selectman instead of the resident doing it themselves. M. Schwarz states he gave the police the complaint information.
- Chief Blodgett discussed the hiring of another part time officer. Board approves and new officer will be sworn in at the next meeting. D. Cremmens questions how many officer we have currently. There are 4 full time officers currently with one out on Workman's Compensation and 4 part time officers and the department is budgeted for 6 part time officers. J. Hotchkiss speaks about how the Police Department has been operating short-handed for the past 2 years.
- Chief Blodgett would like to purchase a new cruiser with the detail funds. Approximately \$23,000. The cruiser would be an all-wheel drive Charger. It could take 8 weeks to complete order. J. Hotchkiss confirms that the Board of Selectmen are agents to expend from the detail account. J. Hotchkiss asked if the police will retire a car after this purchase. It is unknown at this time if one of the older cars will be retired. D. Cremmens asked if the K-9 has been retired as well. Middleton no longer has a K-9 unit. All the K-9 items were donated to Farmington who is starting a K-9 unit, who Middleton will utilize if needed. J. Hotchkiss speaks about the call this past week where all departments worked together, even from other towns and all ended well.
- Chief Blodgett speaks about the Police Department has a few rifles that need to be updated with slings and sites. The sites currently need to be set for individuals; the new sites would be for anyone to use which would make more accurate. New sites would cost approximately \$500 each. Chief Blodgett has not received actual quotes as of yet. J. Kalar suggested increase the equipment line at the town meeting. J. Hotchkiss would like the actual numbers for the next meeting. L. Parker asked about the K-9 income line that has been set aside for years. She questions if those funds can help offset the cost. L. Parker will reach out to the auditor to see if she can clarify those funds.
- Chief Blodgett talks about the numbering system in the town. House numbers are not clearly numbered. He questions if there is a by law on having houses numbered clearly. T. Coskie mentions that the post office requires all houses to be clearly numbered. Chief Blodgett would like the Board to look into having a rule. Chief Lawrence comments on there was an issue recently with a home that had a chimney fire and everyone drove by the residence a few times due to homes not clearly numbered. This could be an opportunity for the Police and Fire to work together in a public safety campaign. Milton has a program where the resident pays the town \$10 and the Fire Department goes out and actually numbers the home.

Public Participation

- J. Coskie provides information regarding the cell towers. She has been working with R. Mains and would like residents to call their cell phone providers and register their concerns with their service. Having their equipment on the towers will help Milton, Farmington, and New Durham. J. Coskie has spoken with Sprint and Verizon. She feels with enough people calling in, it might help things move faster. The cell tower would help pay for a new highway garage. The cell tower would also help Police and Fire with their radio communications.
- J. Fournier asked what happened with the helicopter pad. J. Hotchkiss spoke about how the ball field used to be the location of the landing zone. Now the location will be between the Highway Garage and the Old Town Hall. There is a warrant article to add funds to complete the parking lot at which time the electrical will be buried so landing a helicopter between those buildings will be easier. Also C. Therriault has offered use of his landing strip as well.
- J. Kalar asked if anything is happening with C. Therriault Golf Resort. J. Bailey stated that there were things C. Therriault was working out with his project.
- J. Hotchkiss speaks about the upcoming Hazard Mitigation meeting on March 7th at 10:00 to discuss the needs of Middleton. All are welcome.

J. Bailey motions to enter into non-public at 8:19 pm per RSA 91-A:3 II c. M. Schwarz seconds, all in favor. Out of 1st non-public at 8:45 and enter into 2nd nonscheduled non-public at 8:46 PM. RSA 91-A:3 II c. Re-enter public session at 9:34 PM.

M. Schwarz motions to seal the minutes from the 1st non-public for 6 years. J. Bailey seconds, all in favor. Discussion not to seal minutes from 2nd nonpublic (resident concerns).

L. Parker discusses with the board on the upcoming budget for 2017. With the part time police wages recently increasing, she would like to know if they will also be included in the possible raises from town meeting. Board would like to know specifics that were submitted from Police regarding wages. Was there a 5% included in that budget? Discussion on the current full time officers if they would be included in raises as well. With 3 being new to their positions, would they get raises?? L. Parker feels that Officer Brown would be the only one that is not new besides maybe Officer Voelbel that has been on for almost a year. Board will review and discuss further.

J. Bailey motions to adjourn at 9:58 PM. M. Schwarz seconds, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura Parker, BOS Secretary